

Department of Human Services

General Overview

The Department of Human Services (DHS), formerly the Family Independence Agency (FIA) and formerly the Department of Social Services, assists people in the State to meet financial, medical, and social needs. The DHS assists families and individuals to become self-sufficient, helps protect children and adults from abuse, neglect, and exploitation, and provides services for the prevention and treatment of delinquency.

The Department of Social Services was created by Public Act 280 of 1939, which incorporated the former Department of Social Welfare and the Michigan Commission on Aging, and abolished the Michigan Social Welfare Commission. In 1995, Public Act 223 created the FIA. In 2005, the Department of Human Services was created by Executive Order 2004-38. The DHS administers Federal assistance programs, such as Food Stamps, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) (formerly Aid to Families with Dependent Children, Emergency Assistance, and the Job Opportunities and Basic Skills Training programs), and Supplemental Security Income. The DHS also determines eligibility of families and individuals for grant assistance programs. Executive Order 1996-1, reorganized State government and transferred the Medical Assistance Program from FIA to the Department of Community Health.

The Department has an appropriated 10,343 employees of whom approximately 76.1% are field staff located in State county offices as eligibility specialists, service workers, disability examiners, clerical staff, investigative (protective services) staff, and residential care facility workers. The remaining employees provide state-operated facilities services and management and support for the field staff, in the areas of data processing, policy development, personnel, and financial management, and operate centrally administered programs.

Major Divisions and Programs

The **Adoption Services** program provides planning and supervision services in support of adoptive placements of permanent State wards or Department-supervised court wards. Also, support payments to parents adopting special-needs children are provided.

The **Foster Care** program provides protection for children through out-of-home placements in cases of delinquency, abuse, or neglect when ordered by the probate court.

The **Protective Services** division investigates or remedies abuse, neglect, or exploitation of children or vulnerable adults. The FY 2006-07 appropriation includes an additional 51.2 Child Protective Services (CPS) workers over the average 738.7 CPS workers in FY 2005-06. The appropriation includes an additional 5.0 Office of Child and Adult Licensing positions for high risk investigations related to protective services cases.

Family Preservation and Prevention Services include appropriations for the Families First program, which provides short-term crisis services as an alternative to out-of-home care of children for families referred by protective services, foster care, delinquency, or domestic violence programs, and include parenting training and practical assistance in home management.

The **Day Care Services** program provides assistance for all or a portion of child day care expenses, depending on family income, when the parent, legal guardian or other caretaker is unavailable to provide child care due to employment, education, and/or health or social condition for which treatment is being received. In FY 2005-06, 62,724 child day care average cases per month (equivalent to 1,426,218 children during the year) were served by the program with an average payment of \$312 per child.

The **Family Independence Program (FIP)** is a cash assistance program for families with children (formerly Aid to Families with Dependent Children). In FY 2005-06, 79,775 average cases received assistance per month (a reduction of 71,583 average cases from FY 1996-97), and 22,433 FIP cases were closed due to "excess earnings", 28.6% of all closures, compared with 32,102 cases closed due to "excess earnings" in FY 1996-97. A typical case is composed of one parent and two children. An average caseload of 79,000 and an average payment of \$419 are appropriated for FY 2006-07, the same average caseload and average payment were appropriated in the FY 2005-06 for FIP.

The **State Disability Assistance (SDA)** program provides cash assistance for people with disabilities without dependent children. To qualify, a person must be unable to work for at least 90 days due to physical or mental impairments. An average caseload of 10,600 is assumed for FY 2006-07, 900 cases or a 7.8% decrease from FY 2005-06, while an average payment of \$258, a 2.8% increase from FY 2005-06, is included in the appropriation.